

VZCZCXRO2289
PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMA RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN
DE RUEHDS #0264/01 0301051
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 301051Z JAN 07
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4309
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 7017
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 000264

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/FO, AF/RSA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AFRICAN UNION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING, JANUARY
25, 2006

¶1. (U) SUMMARY. Opening the African Union (AU) Executive Council of Foreign Ministers, AU Commission Chairperson Alpha Konare said he was addressing the group for the last time as Chair of the AU Commission. Konare noted that the next AU Summit (late June in Ghana) member states will elect a new commission, and on September 16 the current AU Commission will hand over responsibility to that new Commission. He reviewed the remaining conflicts in Africa, successes of the AU and new directions. Konare closed with the exhortation: we are not giving up, the struggle for Africa is a struggle for generations, calling on the group to ensure the African Renaissance and pride in being African. Other opening speakers included: UN Economic Commission for Africa Adboulie Janneh, who spoke encouragingly of Africa's sustained economic growth while noting some challenges and Congo's Foreign Minister Rudolphe Adada, Chairperson of the Executive Council. Observers were asked to leave the AU plenary hall following the 90 minutes of opening remarks.

¶2. (U) Countries of Concern:
Reviewing several country situations, Konare spoke of his joy at the release of Burundi's former President Ndayizeye, saying this action will strengthen Burundi's young democracy. Konare said the status and condition of former leaders should engage African's attention, as indicators of democratic protection and restraint. He said Africa must end waste and lost opportunity, thus was compelled to note what has been happening in Guinea where he hopes the just-initiated dialogue will resolve the crisis. He said that the DR Congo needs support now after its recent successful elections.

¶3. (U) Darfur:
Konare mentioned Darfur and the spillover of that crisis to Chad and the Central African Republic, but the hopeful sign of the AU-UN-Sudan agreement on UN assistance to AMIS. Konare spoke bluntly of Darfur, saying this so called silent war is not silent, that all were witnessing it, how can the AU members be content to just issue communiques when the situation in Darfur is in contradiction to all the AU rules?

¶4. (U) Somalia:
Konare noted that for years the AU has been calling attention to Somalia, and now the situation requires that the AU mobilize and deploy the needed 8,000 troops for its mission as soon as possible, since Ethiopia has begun withdrawing

troops as it said it would.

He said Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria were ready, Malawi has shown some willingness and the AU has approached other countries. While appealing for material, funding and even airplanes, he noted the AU cannot leave all this to donor partners, Africans themselves should step up. Konare said that the deployment of troops is not a solution for the Somali problem, it allows a space for all inclusive political dialogue (expecting those who advocate holy war, who press territorial claims from past era or who, seek to fight.)

15. (U) Issues to Move Forward:

Konare emphasized the need for popular input into the AU, saluting NGO,s and Civil Society helping the AU become a Union of the peoples. He also saluted the Press especially those who refused to remain silent on issues, and said that freedom of expression is a non-negotiable and essential thing. He said the African Charter on Democracy and Governance should move forward, regretting the time it took to move from one expert meeting to another. He hoped that a distinctive African Diplomatic Passport would soon be possible, and said the continent needs more progress on free movement of goods and peoples. He criticized the phenomenon of silent war (Darfur) and the mercenaries who take Africa,s wealth and serve its conflicts, and the besieging of Africa,s youth by drugs use.

16. (U) UNECA on Continued Economic Growth:

UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Director General Janneh said increase in prices for Africa,s natural resources and improved macroeconomic situations helped move the overall growth rate from 5.2 percent in 2005 to 5.7

ADDIS ABAB 00000264 002 OF 002

percent in 2006, forecasting a 5.8 percent rate in 2007. However, this was still not enough for Africa to meet its 2015 Millennium Development Goals, he said. Janneh urged more work on peace and security, inter-African trade, adequate infrastructure, empowering of women and youth, and a fair use of Africa,s resources. He noted that during the recent AU Trade Ministerial, he had discussions with WTO head Pascal Lamy, since Africa had the most to gain from a fair and balanced global trade system which the stalled Doha round would provide. Touching on the Summit theme of Science and Technology for Development, Janneh said that many African states do not put enough of their GDP into research and development or the educational infrastructure needed to train scientist and technicians. There is also a lack of technical-academia-national policy interaction, and of public-private partnerships for scientific and technological research.

17. (U) Congolese Foreign Minister Adada Remarks:

Republic of Congo Foreign Minister Adada highlighted his country,s role in the Cote d'Ivoire mediation, and saluted ECOWAS for naming Burkina-Faso President Compaore as a facilitator to this. He expressed hope that the AU-UN Hybrid Force would be a way to restrain the conflict and Darfur, while emphasizing that diplomatic efforts are also necessary. He said the Transitional Federal institutions of Somalia and the Transitional Federal Government and Somali people should be assisted through rapid deployment of an AU force.

COURVILLE
YAMAMOTO